

A  
STATISTICAL INQUIRY  
INTO THE  
CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE OF COLOUR,  
OF THE  
CITY AND DISTRICTS  
OF  
PHILADELPHIA.

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PRINTED BY KITE & WALTON,  
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*By Daniel B. Smith  
and  
Nathan Kite*

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*Waters & Co. N.Y.*

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## STATISTICAL INQUIRY,

&c. &c.

It being thought desirable to obtain an accurate account of the number and condition of the coloured population of the city and districts of Philadelphia, means were taken in the autumn of 1847, and the following winter, to obtain it. Three competent persons were employed to take the enumeration, and to make inquiry into the occupations, means of livelihood, estates, and general condition of the people of colour. It is believed that the results which have been obtained are, in the main, to be depended upon; and they furnish information which will be found useful to those who take an interest in the welfare of this people. The following table exhibits the population as thus ascertained.

	Males.	Fem's.	Total.	under 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 50.	above 50
City of Philadelphia	3772	5304	9076	1209	1642	5205	1020
per cent.	41.56	58.44	100.	13.3	18.1	57.3	11.3
Spring Garden,	359	476	853	119	169	441	105
per cent.	42.09	57.91	100.	14.	19.8	51.7	12.5
N. Lib. and Ken- sington	608	677	1285	245	277	682	81
per cent.	47.31	52.69	100.	19.	21.6	53.1	6.3
Southwark	512	605	1117	198	230	579	110
per cent.	45.83	54.17	100.	17.8	20.6	52.	9.7
Moyamensing	1491	1900	3391	523	649	1975	244
per cent.	44.	56.	100.	15.4	19.1	58.2	7.2
West Philadelphia	154	184	338	76	86	153	23
per cent.	45.56	54.44	100.	22.5	25.4	45.2	6.8
Total	6896	9146	16042	2370	3033	9035	1586
per cent.	42.99	57.01	100.	14.7	18.9	56.3	9.9



The enumeration thus taken does not include the coloured persons residing in white families as domestics. In order to arrive at the number of these, an abstract of the returns of the Marshal in 1820 was obtained, and the original returns of the census of 1840, were carefully examined. By these it appears that those so situated at these several periods, were as follows.

	City.			Districts.			
	Males.	Fem's.	Total.	Males.	Fem's	Total.	General total.
1820	846	1739	2585	182	333	515	3100
1840	837	2001	2840	194	505	699	3539

Showing an increase of about 14 per cent. in 20 years, or  $\frac{7}{5}$  per cent. per annum: at which rate the number of this description in 1847, may be assumed to be 3716. If we take the number in the Eastern Penitentiary, 83, in Moyamensing Prison, 66, in the Alms-house, 277, and in the Shelter for Coloured Orphans, 56, amounting in all to 482, we shall find the actual population, as far as this enumeration can be relied on, to be 20,240.

This amount is probably less than the actual number, as the following statements seem to show. The coloured population of the county of Philadelphia, according to the official returns, was as follows:

in 1820	11,884,
" 1830	15,579,
" 1840	19,831,

being an increase from 1820 to 1830 of 31.23 per cent., and from 1830 to 1840 of 27.16 per cent.; a decreasing ratio, which, if it still continue, should be 23.5 per cent. from 1840 to 1850, making the population in 1850 about 24,500, and in 1847, about 23,000.

In the year 1837 the Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of Slavery, caused an enumeration of the coloured families of Philadelphia to be made, and as the census of the city itself was taken by the same individual employed in the recent one, the two make probably the same approach to accuracy. The population, according to that estimate, was 13,591; the numbers residing in white families may be taken at 3300, making together 16,891. The coloured

population of the whole county in 1837, according to the rate of increase between 1830 and 1840, was about 18,539, and the population of the rural districts was about 1250, leaving for the town population 17,289; the difference 398, is more than made up by those in the Alms-house and prisons, who were not counted in the enumeration of 1837.

The rate of increase between the two enumerations of 1837 and 1847 is 18 per cent., while the rate from 1840 to 1850, according to the decreasing ratio, computed from 1820, 1830 and 1840, should be 23.5 per cent. Several causes have probably contributed to diminish the rate of increase of this population within our city during the last ten years; the chief of which are the mobs of 1842, which drove away many of the people of colour; and the great increase of poor emigrants from Europe, who have supplanted them in employments, which a few years ago were altogether in their hands. Admitting the general accuracy of the recent census, we may expect the returns of 1850 to show a population for the county of 23,400.

It is interesting to examine what conclusions can be drawn as to the condition of a people from the manner in which the population is distributed through the several ages. Where the natural increase is least checked, the number of young persons will be the greatest; and in proportion as checks upon the natural rate of increase exist, whether they be those of vicious habits—oppression—an unhealthy climate, or a redundant population, the number of young persons will relatively decrease; as may be seen by the following table which exhibits these proportions—the whole population in each case being taken at 100.

Whole population.		under 5	under 10	5 to 15	15 to 20	above 50	Rate of increase for preceding ten years.
England	1841	13.23	25.20	22.84	50.38	13.55	
Connecticut	1840	12.3	23.7	22.35	50.95	14.3	
Massachusetts	"	12.7	23.7	21.3	53.9	12.1	
New Hampshire	"	14.15	26.56	24.81	48.12	12.92	
Vermont	"	15.38	29.	25.92	48.04	19.66	
New Jersey	"	16.02	29.38	25.39	48.81	9.78	
Ohio	1830	20.08	36.93	29.86	44.43	6.63	
do	1840	18.08	33.89	27.61	46.47	7.12	
United States	1830	18.01	32.58	26.89	46.8	8.3	33.8
do	1840	17.31	31.38	26.08	48.98	7.56	35.7
Coloured, free, U. S.	"	under 10.	10 to 24	24 to 36	36 to 55	above 55	
		28.84	28.31	19.93	15.18	7.74	20.85
Coloured Slaves, U. S.	"	33.93	31.41	19.11	11.43	4.12	23.77

The only ages at which we can compare the white and coloured population of the United States as given by the census, are those above and those under 10 years.

It will be seen by the above table, that the ratio which persons under 10 years of age bear to the whole population, is lowest in the densely peopled States of Connecticut and Massachusetts, where they form but 23.7 per cent. of the population; while it rises in the other States till it reaches its maximum in Ohio in 1830, where they formed nearly 37 per cent. of the population of that state. It further appears by the above table, that the percentage of slaves under ten years is greater than that of the whole United States, and even than that of Ohio in 1840, showing apparently that the checks upon population do not operate upon the slaves, but that they increase as fast as the most rapidly increasing population of the Union. A closer examination, however, shows this inference to be unfounded; for we find the following to be the respective rates of increase in the whole United States, according to the official returns.

	From 1810 to 1820.	1820 to 1830.	1830 to 1840.
Whites	34.1	33.8	35.7
Slaves	29.1	30.6	23.77
Free Blacks	27.7	37.28	20.85

The sudden diminution of the rate of increase of the people of colour between 1830 and 1840, is so extraordinary, as to induce the suspicion that some error must have crept into the returns of 1830, for in the second of the above decennial periods, the rate of increase of the slaves was 90 and of the free blacks 110, that of the whites being 100; while in the third decennial period these rates were respectively 67 and 58 to 100.

During the last decennial period the increase of the slaves was only two-thirds that of the whites, so that it is clear that the large proportion of slaves under 10 years of age is not caused by their rapid increase, but that it must be owing to causes which lessen the numbers above that age. These causes undoubtedly are the shorter lives of the slaves and consequently greater mortality among the adults; and the escape and emancipation of very considerable numbers.



It appears from the same table, that by the returns of 1840, the ratio of free blacks under 10 years of age to the whole number of that population is rather less than that of the whites under 10 in the slowly increasing states of Vermont and New Jersey, while the increase of that class during the preceding decennial period was 20.85 per cent; being less than that of the slaves. When we consider the extent to which the free coloured population is constantly augmented from the emancipated and fugitive slaves of the south, we shall see no reason to doubt that their numbers are kept down by the greater number of deaths among them, as well as by checks upon the natural increase, much greater than operate upon the slaves.

When we compare the white and coloured populations of the large cities, the same greater mortality and shorter duration of life is apparent, as will be seen by the following table.

Whole population.		under 5	under 10	5 to 15	15 to 50	above 50		Rate of increase for preceding ten years.
City of New York	1840	15.51	26.01	19.24	59.13	6.12		
City of Philadelphia	1840	15.4	26.77	21.	55.4	8.2		37.41
" col'd fam.	1847	14.7		18.9	56.3	9.9		
Coloured population	"			10 to 24	24 to 36	36 to 55	above 55	
Philadelphia county	1830		22.42	29.09	26.92	16.12	6.05	31.23
" "	1840		21.77	27.25	27.64	17.65	6.29	27.16
City of New York	1840		20.91	24.73	28.31	20.38	5.67	
City of Baltimore	"		25.1	27.13	23.	17.72	7.05	
New Jersey	"		27.81	31.05	19.28	14.85	7.01	
Delaware	"		31.61	30.36	16.59	13.53	7.91	
Maryland including Baltimore	"		32.4	26.01	16.11	15.5	9.98	
Pennsylvania including Philadelphia	"		29.67	29.31	20.6	14.25	6.15	

The proportions which naturally exist between the various ages of the community, are greatly disturbed in large cities by those who resort to them from the country to seek a livelihood, and thus swell the number between the ages of 15 and 50. Thus the proportionate numbers of the white inhabitants of New York and Philadelphia, between those ages, are 20 and 16½ per cent. respectively greater than the proportionate numbers for those ages in the whole United States.

The same increase in the proportion of coloured persons between



24 and 55, will be noticed in the returns for New York and Philadelphia for 1840, as compared with numbers for the States of New York and Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland. The increase of the blacks in the County of Philadelphia, for the preceding ten years was 27 per cent. and of the whites  $37\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. ; and it is probable, as has been stated, that the increase for the current decennial period will be found to have been still less.

That this decreasing ratio of increase is owing in part to the greater mortality among the blacks, is shown by the returns of the Board of Health, from which, during the 10 years from 1830 to 1840, it appears that the average annual death among the coloured people was one in 31.05, while among the whites for the same period it was one in 43.12, showing the mortality among the former to have been nearly 40 per cent. greater than among the latter. That the large numbers of this class from 24 to 55, is kept up by immigration, is apparent from the returns of the census lately taken and in which the natives of Pennsylvania are discriminated.

The following table exhibits the result of this particular of the enumeration.

	City.	Sp. Gar.	N. Lib.	South- work.	Moyam- ensing.	W. Phil.	Total.
Natives of Penn.	4550	563	1091	669	1809	218	8900
Per cent. of do.	52.3	68.6	85.8	64.1	53.7	65.7	57.3
Not natives of Pennsylvania.	4148	258	180	374	1558	114	6632
Per cent. of do.	47.7	31.4	14.2	35.9	46.3	34.3	42.7
Birth place not given.	78	14	14	74	24	6	510
Born slaves.	814	74	42	12	97	38	1077

It thus appears that 42.7 per cent. of the coloured population of Philadelphia has been born out of the State ; and this fact, taken in connexion with the slow increase as compared with that of the whites, shows not only a very great immigration, but very great drains, by deaths and removals, of the population thus poured in upon us.

The late enumeration makes no other discrimination than that of natives and not natives of Pennsylvania ; but we have in the

statistics of the Blockley Alms-house for 1847, the means of forming a general idea of the quarters from which these immigrants have come. During that year there were admitted into that Institution 523 people of colour, whose birth place was as follows :—

Natives of		
Pennsylvania	310	59.4 per cent. of the whole.
New Jersey	51	12.85 do.
Other free States	16	} 67 or 31.6 per cent. of the immigrants.
Delaware	56	
Maryland	54	} 145=27.75 per cent. of the whole.
Virginia	21	
Other slave States	14	
Unknown	1	or 68.4 do. of the immigrants.

These proportions, it is true, can scarcely hold with respect to the City at large, and it would be unsafe to take numbers on so small a scale, and for a single year, as a guide. If they hold good, and two-thirds of the immigrants were from the slave States, it is not likely that less than one-half, or about 3000, were born slaves, whereas the number so reported is but 1077. When we examine the returns more closely, we find that, in West Philadelphia, 1 in 3 of the immigrants was born a slave; in Spring Garden, 1 in 3.5; in the Northern Liberties, 1 in 4.3; in the City, 1 in 5; in Southwark, 1 in 31.2; and in Moyamensing, 1 in 16. So that it is probable that the nearly agreeing numbers in the four first named districts are not far wide of the truth; while no reliance can be placed on the returns from the latter two. If we apply to Southwark and Moyamensing, the medium proportion of 1 in 4, it will increase the number of those born slaves, by about 430, making the whole number 1500.

The bearing of these facts upon the general condition of the people of colour will be again adverted to.

The following tabular statement of those born slaves is made out from the returns.

	City.	S. Gard.	N. L.	South- wark.	Moyam- ensing.	W. Phil.	Total.
Born slaves,	814	74	42	12	97	38	1077
Manumitted,	604	40	24	10	61	21	767
Bought their freedom,	194	24	10	2	33	15	275
Am't paid for their freedom	\$45,751	2575	2660	350	8960	2738	63,034
By persons,	181	17	10	1	32	15	256
Not stated how,	16	10	8		3	2	39

### REAL AND PERSONAL ESTATE.

In attempting to form an estimate of the value of the real and personal estate held by the people of colour, the difficulties of obtaining accurate returns from the individuals must be kept constantly in mind. No returns of this nature can be more than an approximation to the actual value; yet those in the City especially, having been made by the same individual ten years before, may be regarded as forming a fair ground for comparison as to the relative condition of the people of colour at the two periods.

The following tables have been carefully computed from the returns thus obtained.

#### *Value of the Real Estate.*

Incumbrances by mortgages  
and ground-rents.

City	368,842	78,421
Spring Garden	27,150	11,050
Northern Liberties	40,675	13,440
Southwark	31,544	5,915
Moyamensing	51,973	20,216
West Philad.	11,625	1,400

\$531,809	\$130,442
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The returns do not, in all cases, state the value of the real estate, sometimes giving merely the amount of tax paid. Thus in the City, the real estate returned with taxes on it amounts to \$225,812, paying a tax of \$2826.75. Taxes on property not valued are returned to the amount of \$1698.50, which at the same rates would represent \$135,880; and real estate amounting to \$7150, the taxes on which are not given, but which, at the same rate, would be \$89.37. It is in this way that the values in the above table have been computed; and they are as accurate as the data obtained will permit. The taxes returned have, whenever it could be done, been taken from the tax-gatherer's receipt, and where this could not be had, from verbal information, or from a comparison with the taxes paid on similar property. Some of the property not occupied by the owners has not been returned; and none of the public property, such as meeting-houses, school-houses, &c., is included in the above estimates.

In addition to this, real estate out of the City, and mostly out of the State, has been returned estimated at \$30,000. Presuming the same sources of error to have existed in making the enumeration of 1837, we may regard the two estimates as exhibiting the relative condition of the two periods. The amount then returned, after deducting the incumbrances, was \$309,626; the present clear estate is \$401,366, being an increase of thirty per cent., which is probably below the real increase as the incumbrances reported in 1837 were \$12,906, while those returned in 1847 were \$130,442, the former amount being without doubt greatly under-estimated. It is perfectly safe, we think, to rate the increase in the value of the real estate thus held at 50 per cent. There are no means of arriving at an accurate estimate of this value through the tax-books, as these do not distinguish between the white and coloured freeholder, and often give no information beyond the name of the tenant occupying the property.

This real estate is held by 315 freeholders who are thus distributed.



*Heads of Families.*

	Whole number.	Own real estate.	Proportion that own real estate.
City	2562	141	1 in 18.1
Spring Garden	272	44	1 in 6.2
Northern Liberties	202	23	1 in 8.8
Southwark	287	30	1 in 9.6
Moyamensing	866	52	1 in 16.6
West Philad.	73	25	1 in 2.9
	<hr/> 4262	<hr/> 315	<hr/> 1 in 13.5

These 315 freeholders are the owners, likewise, of personal property amounting to \$194,318.

They consist of 41 mechanics, 78 labourers, 49 tradesmen, 35 coachmen and hackmen, 28 waiters, 20 hair-dressers, and 11 professional men,—preachers, physicians, &c., and 53 females, 46 of whom are widows.

The following are the returns of the personal estate owned by this class of our fellow citizens. It is evident, upon a comparison with the returns of 1837, that they have not been formed upon the same standard, for while there can be no doubt as to a large increase, the amount is nearly stationary. The present returns are, however, valuable as enabling us to form some idea of the distribution of the personal estate. [See opposite page for Table.]

These estimates embrace principally the clothing, furniture, &c., of the people of colour, and do not include the personal estate of those living in white families, nor the amount deposited in the saving fund. The latter sum is stated on good authority to exceed two hundred thousand dollars.

	City.	Spring Garden.	N. Liberties.	Southwark.	Moyamensing.	West Philadel.
Total \$630,886	455,620	9,562	34,044	30,402	90,553	12,065
Average to each family \$147.52	178.53	47.33	108.07	105.30	106.63	151.57
No personal estate	6 families	families per ct.	families per ct.	families per ct.	15 families	families per ct.
Families owning \$25 and less.	570 = 22.3	66 = 32.7	62 = 19.7	39 = 13.7	259 = 30.5	5 = 6.9
	own each fam.	own each fam.	own	own each fam.	own	own
	\$9,955 = \$17.46	\$1054 = \$15.97	\$662 = \$13.97	\$660 = 16.92	\$2066 = \$7.97	\$100 = \$20
Families owning from \$25 to \$50	772 = 30.2	79 = 39.1	102 = 32.4	93 = 32.6	160 = 18.8	16 = 22
	own	own	own	own	own	own
	32,203 = \$41.71	2686 = \$34	4240 = \$41.56	3500 = \$40.55	6555 = 41.15	670 = 41.83
Own from \$50 to \$100	404 = 15.8	38 = 18.8	68 = 20	49 = 17.2	134 = 15.8	9 = 12.3
	own	own	own	own	own	own
	33,205 = \$32.41	2742 = \$72.65	4832 = 76.76	3887 = 79.33	11,135 = 83.10	775 = 86.33
Own from 100 to 500	650 = 25.4	19 = 9.4	83 = 26.3	102 = 35.8	291 = 34.3	42 = 57.4
	own	own	own	own	own	own
	163,215 = 251.10	3080 = 152	18,445 = 223.23	20,295 = 199	66,562 = 228.73	8520 = 210
Own from 500 to 20,000*	156* = 6.1		5 = 1.6	2 = .7	5 = .6	1 = 1.4
	own		own	own	own	own
	216,950 = 1390.70		5300 = \$1060	1400 = \$750	4200 = 850	700

\* Of these 99 own from 500 to 1000; 43 from 1000 to 2000; 10 from 2000 to 5000; 2 from 5000 to 10,000; and 2 from 10,000, to 20,000.

*Rents and Taxes.*

The following tabular statement exhibits the amount of rent paid, and the manner in which the tenements occupied are rented:

Rents paid	City.	Sp. Garden.	N. Lib.	Southwark.	Moyamen.	West Phila.	Total.
Total rents . . . .	124,979.37	8697.06	11,128	11,924.15	40,809.51	2127.37	199,665.46
Rent by the year . . . .	4	4	5	7	18	12	50
Average rent . . . .	147.81	125.	167.40	148.43	163.	66.60	
Rent by the quarter . . . .	1131	35	73	79	210	19	1547
Average Rent . . . .	58.80	56.97	58.41	55.37	67.23	37.48	
Rent by the month . . . .	1078	98	143	139	373	16	1847
Average rent . . . .	45.20	46.68	38.53	38.78	43.08	32.78	
Rent by the week . . . .	248	38	34	34	205	4	563
Average rent . . . .	36.47	42.84	30.	32.94	35.47	22.84	
Rent by the night . . . .					12		12
Average rent . . . .					9½ cts. per night.		
Make rent by underletting . . . .	6	1					7
Pay tax for rent . . . .			3				3
Rent free . . . .	2	1	1		1		5
Live in their own house . . . . .	88	23	38	28	44	20	241
Not reported . . . .	5	3			3		11

The above rental of 199,665.46 is paid by 4019 families, and averages about \$49.68 per family. The average rental in 1837 as shown by the returns, was \$44 per annum. The taxes and water rents paid are distributed as follows:—

	City.	Sp. Garden.	N. Lib.	Southwark.	oyamen.	West Phila.	Total.
Taxes . . . . .	4614.63	234.50	382.40	405.85	616.89	104.12	6308.38
Water rents . . . .	751.	35.	20.	60.50	165.50	—	1032.

## TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS.

The returns enable us to state the occupations of 3358 men and 4249 women, who form, it is probable, about four-fifths of the able bodied population, above 21 years of age. These occupations may be thus classified.

## Occupations of the Men.

Mechanics	286
Labourers	1581
Seafaring men	240
Coachmen, carters, &c.	276
Shop keepers and traders	166
Waiters, cooks, &c.	557
Hairdressers	156
Various	96
	<hr/>
	3358
	<hr/>

The principal occupations are as follows : boot and shoe makers 113, bakers 7, carpenters 33, cabinet makers 17, blacksmiths and workers in metal 9, tailors 18, sailmakers 10, tanners 14, bricklayers 5, plasterers 10, painters and glaziers 10, basket and mat makers 9, dyers and hatters 7, engineers 5, second-hand clothes dealers 52, furniture dealers 22, confectioners and cake sellers 34, hominy dealers 15, hucksters 11, cooks, tavern, oyster and eating house keepers 77, waiters 453, musicians 32, preachers 22, schoolmasters 11, bleeders, dentists, physicians and herb doctors 19, coachmen 111, carters and draymen 157, labourers and jobbers 603, porters 444, hod carriers 102, work in brick yards 70, wood sawyers 76, stevadores 57, white washers 40, raggers and boners 51\*.

In 1838 a pamphlet was published containing a directory of coloured mechanics and tradesmen, which furnishes us with a point of comparison. It contained the names of 506 mechanics and tradesmen, of whom 207 were master workmen, and 299 journey-

\* Ragging and boning is the common resource for the lowest class of coloured persons who are out of other employment.



men. In a note appended to the Register it is stated, that one half of the latter work as journeymen, and the rest from choice or necessity follow other occupations. The number working at their trades in 1838, may therefore be stated at 357 ; according to the recent enumeration the corresponding number is 481, being an increase of 35 per cent. Many of these mechanics and tradesmen are excellent and industrious workmen ; 75 of them own altogether real estate valued at \$230,000, and personal estate valued at \$96,000.

#### Occupations of the Women.

Washerwomen	1970
Needle-women	486
Cooks	173
Occupied at home	290
Do. day's work	786
Living in families	156
Various	72
Trades	213
Raggers and boners	103

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4249

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Among the occupations are 216 dress makers, 231 seamstresses, 19 tailoresses, 19 milliners, 33 keepers of boarding, eating and oyster houses, 13 school mistresses, 10 cake bakers, 60 white washers, 24 hucksters, 12 confectioners, 9 mat makers, 33 sewers of carpet rags, 35 shopkeepers, &c. The aggregate numbers of the occupations thus reported, of the children at school, and at service, and of the children under five years fall about 2500 short of the whole enumeration of those above five years old. Nearly one half of this number, it will be seen, is under 21 ; and the deficiency is readily explained by the fact, that the occupations of the heads of families only, are in many instances reported.

#### EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OF THE CHILDREN.

As the ages returned in the late census are those under 5, between 5 and 15, 15 and 50, and 50 and upwards, we shall have

to estimate the numbers between 15 and 20 by comparison with other returns. As the proportionate distribution of the coloured population into the several ages, nearly agrees with that of the white population of Philadelphia, we may take the latter as our guide; and this shows the number of minors between 15 and 20 to be nearly the same as that between 5 and 10. The period between 5 and 15 may be regarded as comprising the children sent to school, while that between 10 and 20 comprises those whose services are made available to their parents; and the numbers comprised between these ages, that is, between 5 and 20, are computed to be about 4500. Of this number 1940, or upwards of 64 per cent. of those between 5 and 15, go to school; and we have returns of the manner in which 1340 of those who do not go to school, are disposed of, leaving about 1200 minors between 5 and 20, who are not reported.

The following table exhibits the manner in which the children at school are distributed. The returns are not only imperfect, but sometimes state the number that have been to school in the course of the year, which explains the discrepancy between the numbers reported and those on the school lists at the end of the year.

*Public and Charity Schools.*

	No. in School List.	City.	Sp. Garden.	N. Liberties.	Southwark.	Moyamensing.	West Philad.	Total Returns.
Public Grammar School in Lombard Street.	463	321	17	17	41	127		523
Abolition Society's Infant School in Lombard St.	70							
Public Primary School in Gaskill Street.	226	126		3	35	64		228
Friends' School in Raspberry Street.	155	147	3	2	7	36		195
Public Prim. Sch. Brown St.	113	2	8	139				149
Adelphi School in Wager St.	106	78	71					149
Shiloh Baptist Infant School, Clifton and Cedar Streets.		76			10	121		207
Bedford St.						32		32
Moral Reform		65			5	11		81
Uncertain.		11			1			12
Public School in Oak Street, West Philadelphia.							67	67
		826	99	161	99	391	67	1643

Of the public and charity schools, that in Raspberry-street is supported by the Society of Friends, being under the particular care of the Monthly Meeting for the Southern District. It was founded in the year 1770, by the voluntary contributions of Friends; and was taught for many years by Anthony Benezet, who left by will most of his estate for its support. Considerable funds have been bequeathed by individuals for the same purpose, and any deficiency in the income has been made up from time to time by the monthly meetings of Philadelphia. The school was long held in Willing's Alley, and the present school-house, which is a two-story brick building 30 feet by 40, was built in the year 1845. The number of pupils attending during the year 1847 was 336; which when compared with the number attending at the close of the year 155, shows the shortness of the time for which the children generally remain in school, and explains the excess of the numbers returned in the census as going to that school, over those actually on the list at the close of the year. It is in this way probably that the same discrepancy is to be explained in the two schools next on the list. Two evening schools for adults, one for each sex, is held during the winter months, in the same building, at which more than four hundred men and women are taught the rudiments of learning. An evening school for girls over fourteen years of age, conducted by an association called "The Association of Friends for improving the condition of the free people of colour," is held during the six winter months in Seventh street below Arch, at which upwards of eighty pupils belong.

The Wager-street School is owned and conducted by The Philadelphia Association of Friends for the Instruction of Poor Children. This association was founded in 1808, and established the free school for white children, known as The Adelphi School, in Pegg-street, east of Second street. After the public school system had gone fully into operation, the funds being no longer needed for white children, a school for coloured children was begun, and the present school-house, a building two-stories high and 30 feet by 40, was built in Wager-street in the year 1831. It consists of two branches,—a school for girls and an infant school for both sexes.

The Infant School in Lombard-street was established nearly six

years ago by the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the Abolition of Slavery; children are received in it from 2 to 5 years of age, and taught by two coloured teachers.

The Infant School in Shiloh meeting-house is a large and flourishing school of 14 or 16 years standing, under the care of the Infant School Society of Philadelphia.

A school called the Ragged School for the neglected children of the most destitute of the people of colour, has been for two or three years held in Bedford-street, and is now (1st mo. 1849,) removed to the new House of Industry in Catharine-street. It is attended by about 70 children.

*Private Schools.*

Teachers.	City.	Sp. Garden.	N. Liberties.	Southwark.	Moyam'using.	West Philad.	Total return- ed.
Solomon Clarkson . . . .	14			6	7		27
*Robert George . . . .	5				1		6
*John Marshal . . . .	6						6
John Ross . . . .	4			1	3		8
Jonathan Tudas . . . .	16				2		18
David Ware . . . .	42		3	5	6		56
In Private Families . . . .	8						8
Ann Bishop . . . .	7						7
Virginia Blake . . . .	12				7		19
Amelia Bogle . . . .	17				1		18
Ann E. Carey . . . .	7						7
Sarah Ann Douglass . . . .	22		4		1		27
Rebecca Hailstock . . . .					6		6
*Emma Hall . . . .	2						2
Emmeline Higgins . . . .	17			4			21
Margaret Johnson . . . .	11			2	10		23
Peterson . . . .				2			2
Martha Richards . . . .	4						4
Dinah Smith . . . .	22				1		23
*Mary Still . . . .	5						5
	223		9	24	40		296

\* Those marked with an asterisk are recently opened.

These private schools are mostly confined to the teaching of the common rudiments of learning. The numbers in attendance are given as we find them, and are no doubt, in many cases, incomplete. The only school from the teacher of which a report has been received, is John Ross's. He has from 20 to 28 scholars,



and teaches "the higher branches and the languages." Sarah M. Douglass's is an excellent school of many years standing; she has a good cabinet and philosophical apparatus, and teaches the higher branches.

The number of children not at school, whose situation is reported, is 1327. Of these 270 have no occupation; 65 of them being merely said to be idle, 116 at home idle, 33 helpless, and 33 kept at home for want of clothes: 274 are employed at home; 44 are waiters, 310 at service; 179 are employed as common labourers; of whom 39 are in brick yards, 12 are sweeps, 18 porters and 35 labourers and jobbers: 230 are learning some trade; of whom 120 are apprenticed out,—the occupations which they are learning, not being stated except in ten cases: 64 are seamstresses and dress-makers, 15 barbers, 7 boot and shoe makers, 3 carpenters, 2 tailors, 2 in a button factory, and 2 teachers.

When we call to mind, that besides these there are at least 1200 children between the ages of 5 and 20, of whom no account is received, the greater part of whom are probably growing up in idle and vicious habits; it is clear that this is one of the most painful facts brought to light by this inquiry, and one which should promptly and earnestly engage the attention of the friends of the people of colour.

### BENEFICIAL SOCIETIES.

By the returns it appears that 4904 persons, or nearly one-half the adult population, are members of Mutual Beneficial Societies, the funds of which are appropriated to support the members in sickness, and to bury the dead. Many of these persons belong to two or more Societies at once, with the view of increasing the amount to be received when sick. The names of 106 of these Mutual Beneficial Associations have been received, and particulars of income, &c. of 76 of them. These 76 societies consist of 5187 members. The contributions are from 25 to 37½ cents per month, and paid weekly, monthly, or quarterly. The allowance per week to the sick members varies from \$1.50 to 3.00 per week, being generally \$2.50 or 3.00. From ten to twenty dollars is usually allowed for funeral expenses. The annual

income of these 76 societies is stated to be \$16,814.23, and their permanent invested funds, \$17,771.83.

Six hundred and eighty-one families are reported to have been assisted by them during the year 1847, and the sums furnished to 517 of these families is reported and stated at \$7189.86. On comparing this list with that given in the year 1847, we find that the number of societies is increased from 80 to 106; and that more than one-half of those then reported have disappeared, or have assumed new names. The permanent funds of the 76 societies of which the details have been furnished, exceed those reported in 1837 by upwards of \$7,700, while the annual subscription is less by about \$2000; although, if the 29 societies whose income is not reported, be supposed to average the same rate as the others, the amount annually subscribed for mutual relief will considerably exceed the amount so contributed in 1837.

It is clear that these charitable funds must very considerably relieve the distress attendant on the sickness of the heads of families, and maintain a large portion of the people of colour, under privations, and in circumstances, which would otherwise throw them upon the public for relief. This is evident from the returns of the Alms-house for 1847. Out of 4303 patients admitted during that year, 523 or 12.15 per cent. were people of colour; and of the 1704, the average number of patients in the house, 196, or 11.5 per cent. were of this description. The proportion of people of colour in the county of Philadelphia was, in 1840, 8.3 per cent. that of the whole population. When we advert to the character of the pauperism of the people of colour during that year, and find that of the 523 patients admitted, considerably more than one-half were cases of fever from adjoining districts of Moyamensing and the city, the small number of ordinary paupers admitted into the Alms-house, must create surprise.

The amount of out-door relief furnished to the people of colour is likewise quite small. The whole number that receive public out-door aid, is stated, in the returns we have received, at 442, a number probably too small.

The 4262 families, of which the coloured population consists, according to the late census, are thus distributed.

Heads of families.	City.	Sp. Garden.	N. Liberties.	Southwark.	Moyamensing	W. Philada.	Total.
Married . . . . .	1515	141	209	202	632	57	2756
Unmarried . . . . .	200	14	10	17	32		273
Widows . . . . .	701	33	47	50	148	13	992
Widowers . . . . .	62	4	4	9	30	1	110
Deserted wives . . . . .	68	9	2	7	20	3	108
Deserted husbands . . . . .	16	1		2	4		23
Total . . . . .	2562	202	272	287	866	73	4262
Received public aid 1846-7.	320	3	6	7	104	2	442

So that only 18 families out of the 834 families living in Spring Garden, Northern Liberties, Southwark, and West Philadelphia, received support as out door paupers. That this is not very wide of the truth is confirmed by the statistics of the Alms-house, for out of 523 patients admitted in the year 1847, only twenty-one were from Southwark, and 16 from the districts north of Vine Street.

These numbers are obtained from the late census, which does not state whether the aid was furnished by the Guardians of the Poor or the Union Benevolent Society. The reports of these bodies do not state the number of people of colour who have received aid from their funds; and it is probable that much assistance has been given by both, especially the Union Benevolent Society, of which we have no returns. The belief is that the people of color are a principal object of its care in Moyamensing. The Southern Soup house which has been in operation for many years, distributes about 70 per cent. of its soup to the people of colour. So that it is probable that they receive their full proportion of the private charity bestowed in Southwark and Moyamensing.

An additional proof of the small amount claimed from the public funds by the people of colour, is found in the manner in which the out-door relief to the 320 families residing in the city is bestowed. This relief consists in the greater number of cases of donations of wood; some receive a small supply of groceries in addition; some receive from a quarter to half a ton of coal; and a few, fifty cents per week during sickness. Only four families

received one cord of wood, six, three-quarter cord, 173 half a cord, and one hundred and three one-quarter cord. The families relieved were those of 197 widows, and nineteen women left by their husbands; being in both cases about 28 per cent. of that description of families, and the remainder were married people, widows and unmarried women, being each about 5 per cent. of their respective numbers in the city.

The character of those admitted into the Alms-house during the year 1847, confirm these views of the general independence of the coloured population in respect of the aid they receive from the public funds.

During that year 523 patients (including 23 born in the house) were received into the Alms-house. Of this number, 117 were from the city proper, 334 from Moyamensing, 21 from Southwark, 16 from the districts north of Vine street, and 10 from the Prisons and Hospital; so that two-thirds of the whole number were from Moyamensing, which has but one-fifth of the coloured population. Of the white residents at the Alms-house in that year, 14.3 per cent. died, while of the coloured inmates 44.6 per cent. died. Of this number of 523,—277, or more than one-half, were cases of fever; seven out of every nine of which were from Moyamensing, and most of these were cases of low typhus fever from the neighbourhood of Baker, Bedford and Small streets. Of the paupers thus admitted, 215 were intemperate, 137 moderate drinkers, and 134 temperate. It is therefore to the people of colour crowded together in the narrow courts and alleys of this neighbourhood that the following remarks respecting those admitted into the Alms-house are applicable.

“In the general character of coloured paupers, on an average, we find that about 7 in a hundred only, can read a little, and that the portion whose examinations have been required to prove their legal place of settlement, we also find for the last four years, that about 5 in one hundred only can write sufficient to affix their signatures. We also find that very few have learned any trade or profession—having been chiefly employed as ostlers, carriage-drivers, porters at taverns, washer-women, gatherers of rags and bones, &c. &c. &c.

“That the causes of pauperism are chiefly dissolute habits, intemperance, lewdness and filthiness—very few, when admitted,



having the necessary decent clothing to induce persons of standing in society to give them employment; 75 garments out of 100 with which they are clad on admission, being destroyed on account of vermin and infectious diseases. In respect to the question whether they are born free or otherwise, we have found it very difficult to get satisfactory answers, as they will but seldom admit that they were born slaves. We have every reason to believe, however, that a very considerable proportion of them are runaways."

### EASTERN PENITENTIARY.

The statistics of the Eastern Penitentiary furnish some interesting facts. Since its opening near the close of 1829, to the end of the year 1848, 2421 prisoners have been received, 769 or 32.67 per cent. were people of colour, and there were in the house at the close of the period 83 prisoners. Of the number admitted, 709 were males, and 81 females; 527 served their time out; 26 were pardoned; 12 (eleven of whom were arrested for attempting to rescue a slave at Carlisle) were discharged by writ of error, and 140 died. The average time of their sentence was rather more than  $3\frac{1}{4}$  years.

The whole number of prisoners received into the prison during each period of five years from the time of its being opened, was as follows:

	WHITES.			BLACKS.			Bl'ks to every 100 Whites.
	Total.	Pr. Ann.	Pr. Ct.	Total.	Pr. Ann.	Pr. Ct.	
1829 to 1835, 1st 5 years,	238	47.6	45.6	124	24.8	38.6	34.2
1835 to 1840, 2d "	522	104.4	100	321	64.2	100	38.1
1840 to 1845, 3d "	492	98.4	94.25	209	41.8	65.1	29.8
1845 to 1849, 4th (4 y'rs.)	377	94.25	90.28	126	31.5	49.	25.
Deducting the 11 Carlisle rioters discharged by writ of error,				115	26.75	41.6	22.8

The rate of decrease in the number of prisoners admitted in these consecutive periods, while the population of the state was increasing at the rate of nearly 3 per cent. per annum, is very remarkable. Taking the 2d period of 5 years as the standard, the convictions of white prisoners in the 3d period would have been 109 instead of 94.25, and in the 4th period 122.5 instead of

90.28, had convictions for crime kept pace with the population. This is still more remarkable in the case of the coloured population, especially if we deduct the 11 prisoners convicted of a riot for attempting to rescue a slave at Carlisle—an act committed under a momentary excitement, and not to be classed with the felonies for which the remaining prisoners were convicted. Deducting these, the coloured convicts during the last period are less than one-half of those during the second; and they have been steadily decreasing in proportion to the whites.

These results are affected by the circumstance, that in the year 1841 a law was passed, allowing the judges to sentence prisoners who were imprisoned for two years and upwards, either to the state Penitentiaries or to those county prisons which were constructed on the solitary plan. Philadelphia, Chester and Dauphin counties have such prisons, and have received a portion of the convicts previously sent to the State Penitentiaries. The only county prison we have been able to inquire about is our own, and the following table shows the numbers of prisoners sentenced to hard labour there since its opening.

1835 to 1840. 1840 to 1845. 1845 to 1848.

Average number of coloured prisoners sent to County Prison	121.	94.4	79.67
do. " Penitentiary	64.2	41.8	31.
	<hr/> 185.2	<hr/> 136.2	<hr/> 110.67

These are the entire numbers of people of colour sentenced to hard labour in the two prisons, and the rapid and steady decrease is certainly remarkable.

This greater influence of the Penitentiary system in deterring from crime the people of colour, than the whites—may be attributed by some to peculiarity of moral temperament which renders the solitude of the prison cell more dreaded by them. Be that as it may, there can be no doubt that the system has been more fully tried in respect to them than the whites. Their sentences for crimes of the same grade are much longer, and very few in comparison with the whites have been discharged by pardons. Up to the close of the year 1846, out of 664 coloured prisoners 22 or 3.3 per cent. had been pardoned, while out of 1512 white prisoners, the pardons had been 217 or 14.22 per cent.! This

decrease in the number of coloured convicts may likewise be connected with another fact derived from the same statistics, and indicating a general improvement in the condition of the people of colour. Of the number admitted previous to 1840, 51 per ct. could neither read nor write, 27.5 could read but not write, and 21.5 could read and write. Of those admitted since that year, these numbers were severally 40., 29.4, and 30.6,—showing a marked improvement in the education of those received. Of the whole number admitted, 400, or 51.1 per cent. were natives of Pennsylvania, 264 or 33.7 per cent. were natives of the slave states, and 119 or 15.2 per cent. were natives of other free states than Pennsylvania; the per centage from the free states being 66.3 and from the slave states 33.7,—numbers which agree very nearly with the proportionate numbers of natives of Pennsylvania and of other free states and the slave states as shown in page 11.

The education they had received is also stated. Of those born in the slave states 52.2 per cent. could neither read nor write, 27.8 per cent. could read but not write, and 20 per cent. could read and write. Of those born in the free states 43.8 per cent. could not read or write, 28.9 could read but not write, and 27.3 per cent. could read and write.

The greater proportion acknowledged their indulgence in strong drink, and most of them were intemperate. Few had any mechanical trades, though many acquired one during their confinement.

Up to the close of the year 1846, 1359 white prisoners had been received, and 718 coloured prisoners. The crimes for which they were imprisoned, and the respective numbers, may be thus distributed:—

1. Offences against the person.
2. Offences against property committed with violence.
3. Offences against property committed without violence.
4. Malicious offences against property.
5. Forgery and other offences against the currency.
6. Miscellaneous offences.

	Whites.		Coloured.	
	Number.	Per centage.	Number.	Per centage.
Class 1.	166	11.4	89	12.4
2.	191	13.1	165	22.9

3.	873	59.8	432	60.2
4.	22	1.5	14	2.
5.	167	11.5	7	1.
6.	40	2.7	11	1.5
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1459	100.	718	100.

While the per centage of crimes against the person is nearly the same in both classes, those which are attributable to mere animal passions constitute 64 per cent. of the class of coloured convicts, and 28.3 per cent. of the whites; the remainder being crimes committed under the influence of anger, revenge, &c., and such as assault and battery, manslaughter, murder, &c. The convictions for petty larceny are 55 per cent. of the coloured convicts, and 48.8 of the whites; while for forgery, counterfeiting, and passing counterfeit money, they are 1 per cent. of the former, and 11.5 of the latter.

#### PLACES FOR RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.

The following, it is believed, is a correct list of the meeting-houses of the various religious congregations of the people of colour.

<i>City.</i>		Date of
Episcopalian—St. Thomas,	5th below Walnut st.	1794
*Presbyterian—Second,	St. Mary above 6th st.	1823
	House built 1832	
“ Central,	Lombard near 9th st.	
*Baptist Union	Little Pine above 6th st.	
“ Third	Clarkson Hall, Haines st.	
*Methodist Bethel Church,	6th above Lombard st.	
* “ First Wesley,	Lombard below 6th st.	
* “ Second or little Wesley,	Hurst below Lombard st.	
“ Little Union,	Little Pine below 7th st.	
* “ St. John,	Mary st.	

#### *Moyamensing.*

*First Presbyterian,	7th below Shippen st.
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\*Baptist, Shiloh, Clifton and Cedar sts.  
 Methodist, Little John Wesley, Shippen st.  
 " School House, Corn st.

*Spring Garden and Northern Liberties.*

\*First Baptist, 11th and Pearl st.  
 \*Methodist, Bethel Union, Coates below Old York Road.  
 " Zoar, Brown st.

*West Philadelphia.*

\*Baptist, Oak st.  
 \*Methodist, Mount Pisgah.

We have not sufficient returns to enable us to estimate the number of persons that are members of these various religious societies. From the 12 distinguished by an asterisk, returns have been received, which state the number of regular members at 3974, and persons usually attending at 6100. These twelve congregations all have First-day or Sunday schools, employing 107 teachers, and attended by upwards of one thousand scholars. The cost of eleven of the twelve meeting-houses is given at nearly 67,000 dollars, and they appear to have been erected principally, in some cases entirely, by the contributions of the people of colour. It would appear from the returns of the late census, that upwards of ten thousand of the people of colour are in the practice of attending religious meetings; a number, probably, overstated, as it is within a few hundred of the whole population above fifteen years of age.

There are a number of Library Companies and Literary Associations established among the people of colour, several of which appear to be supported with zeal and ability, and which, no doubt, have an important influence upon those who are within the sphere of their operations.

A remarkable feature in the statistics of the coloured population of Philadelphia, is the difference in the character of the different districts. Thus, with respect to their place of birth, the Northern Liberties (in which is comprised in this census, the district

east of Sixth street and all north of Vine street,) contains 14.2 per cent. of immigrants; Spring Garden (which comprises all west of Sixth st. and north of Vine st.,) contains 31.4 per cent.; West Philadelphia, 34.3 per cent.; Southwark, 35.9 per cent.; Moyamensing, 46.3 per cent., and the city itself 47.7 per cent.

That some of these immigrants are among the most industrious and thriving of the people of colour is shown by the fact, that of the 315 freeholders, the families of 75 are all natives of the state; all the members of 52 of these families were born out of the state; and 184 families are only in part natives of the state. Many of these immigrants are from the adjoining free states, and a large proportion of the remainder have been slaves, who have bought their own freedom, and often that of their nearest relations, and have shown, in freeing themselves from bondage, the energy and industry which have made them useful and respectable citizens.

Yet it is equally certain, that this part of the coloured population is the most numerous in those crowded streets and alleys where the destitution and wretchedness is most intense and infectious, and where the evil effects of herding together in crowded courts and miserable buildings, and the indifference to the ordinary comforts and decencies of life, are most apparent.

We may fairly trace these extremes in the condition of the coloured immigrants to the evil influences of slavery. Upon feeble and common minds it operates like a blight, withering the active principles of our nature, and inducing a listlessness and an indifference to the future, which even should the slave become a freeman, leave all the vicious habits of slavery worked into the very grain of his character. To those on the other hand, who have resisted these withering influences and bought their freedom with the hard-earned fruits of their own industry, the love of liberty often imparts a desire for improvement and a consciousness of their own worth as men, that invigorate all their powers and give energy and dignity to their character as freemen.

If we examine the situation of the several districts as regards the personal property owned in them, we shall find a confirmation of these views. The greatest density of the immigrant population is in the city and Moyamensing between Pine and Fitzwater streets, and west of Fifth street and east of Tenth street; and although it is within these limits that the extreme poverty and

distress so often alluded to are found, yet a large number of the most respectable and prosperous persons of colour are inhabitants of the principal streets in this district.

In Spring Garden 32.7 per cent. of the people of colour hold personal property less than 25 dollars in value, and averaging \$15.97 per family. In the Northern Liberties, these number 19.7 per cent. and \$13.97; in Southwark, 13.7 per cent. and \$16.92; in Moyamensing, 30.5 per cent. and \$7.97; in the city, 22.3 per cent. and \$17.66; and in West Philadelphia, 6.9 per cent. and \$20.

The families owning more than one hundred dollars of personal estate are as follows: in the City, 33.7 per cent.; Spring Garden 9.4 per cent.; Northern Liberties 27.9 per cent.; Southwark 36.5 per cent.; Moyamensing 34.9 per cent. and West Philadelphia 58.8 per cent.

The personal property held in the City, averages \$178.53 per family; that held in Spring Garden, \$47.33; in the Northern Liberties, \$108.7; in Southwark, \$105.30; in Moyamensing, \$106.63; and in West Philadelphia, \$151.57. Yet Spring Garden which is the poorest of all the districts, has no poverty so abject as that in Moyamensing, and receives scarcely any aid from the Public Funds for its poor.

The coloured population show a strong tendency to crowd together in narrow courts and alleys.

Thus the entire population north of Vine and east of 6th street is 272 families of 1285 persons. About one-third of this, viz.—101 families and 415 persons, live in Apple-street and its courts, and in Paschall's Alley. Apple-street, including Hicks's court, contains 37 families of 138 persons, living in 16 houses; Shotwell's Row, which is in this street, but not included in the above, has seven houses containing 16 families of 65 persons, living in rooms about 8 feet square. Paschall's Alley contains 48 families of 212 persons in 28 houses; one house contains 7 families of 33 persons, living in 13 rooms of about 8 feet square; and the whole rent of the house is \$266 per annum. Yet all of them have comfortable beds and bedding.

So, likewise, more than one-third of the families, and nearly one-third of the coloured population of Moyamensing, comprising the district south of Cedar-street and west of Passyunk Road, is

crowded into the narrow space between Fifth and Eighth streets, and South and Fitzwater streets, as will be seen by the following statement. Within these limits there are in

Shippen street	55 families.
Bedford street	63 "
Small street	63 "
Baker street	21 "
Seventh and South streets	14 "
Spafford street	16 "
Freytag's Alley	9 "
Prosperous Alley	11 "
Black Horse Alley	5 "
Hutton's Court	9 "
Yeager's Court	9 "
Dickerson's Court	5 "
Britton's Court	5 "
Cryder's Court	4 "
Sherman's Court	13 "

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302 families.

It is in this district and in the adjoining portion of the City, especially Mary street and its vicinity, that the great destitution and wretchedness exist, which have been supposed by some, to be prevalent among the greater part of the coloured population of Philadelphia.

Of the 302 families living within the above limits in Moyamensing, the personal property of 176, or of 58 per cent., is returned at \$603.50, an average of \$3.43 per family. Fifteen families of 42 persons, living in Small street above Sixth street, in miserable rooms, have their whole property valued at seven dollars. Seven of these rent by the week at an average of \$33.25 per annum, and eight by the night at an average of \$36.50 per annum. They are all raggars and boners; and 29 out of the 42 are not natives of Pennsylvania.

In Mary street and its courts there are 80 families of 281 persons living in 35 houses, many of whom are industrious and temperate, although living amidst much surrounding misery.

In Giles's Alley, extending from Cedar to Lombard street, there



are 42 families of 147 persons living in 20 houses. One house has five rooms, seven feet square, with seven inmates who pay a weekly rent, amounting to \$91 per annum. 83 of these persons are not natives of Pennsylvania, and 13 of the families receive public aid.

The unusual prevalence of typhus fever in this district during the year 1847, swept away many of its residents, and induced the Board of Health forcibly to expel the inhabitants of several of the small streets and courts from their houses, and to board up the streets until the proper means of purification and fumigation had been resorted to.

The following extract from a letter of the late Coroner, Dr. Napoleon B. Leidy, conveys a lively picture of the distress which then prevailed, and of the degraded condition of these neglected people.

"Philadelphia, Dec'r 18th, 1848.

"During the fall and winter of 1845 and 1846, I observed much misery and distress among a portion of the coloured population of the city and suburbs, which was much increased in the fall and winter of 1846 and 1847. During the period before named, from September 1837, to April 1848, it increased to such extent as made it necessary to ask the intervention of the Board of Health and Guardians of the Poor. In that time, there came under my notice 76 cases, coloured, male and female (mostly within six blocks or squares, in the district of Moyamensing,) whose deaths after a full and thorough investigation of each case, were attributable to intemperance, exposure, want of nourishment, &c. Of this number eighteen were from 18 to 30 years of age; forty-six, from 30 to 50 years, and twelve from 50 to 90 years, besides some children who also died from exposure and want of proper nourishment and care.

"Many were found dead in cold and exposed rooms and garrets, board shanties five and six feet high, and as many feet square, erected and rented for lodging purposes, mostly without any comforts, save the bare floor, with the cold penetrating between the boards, and through the holes and crevices on all sides; some in cold, wet and damp cellars, with naked walls, and in many instances without floors; and others found dead lying in back yards, in alleys, and other exposed situations.

"These cases were principally confined to the lowest and most degraded of the coloured population, whose occupations were ragging, boning and prizing. Hundreds are engaged in those occupations and living as others have, that have died; many of whom, unless provided for, must become victims of death through their habits and exposure, should the coming winter be at all severe. Most of them have no home, depending chiefly upon the success of their pursuits through the day, either in earning or begging, (and I may add stealing,) sufficient to pay their grog and lodging. For food, they depend mostly upon begging, or gathering from the street what is thrown from the houses or kitchens of others.

"Lodgings are obtained from a penny to six-pence a night according to the extent of the accommodations, with or without an old stove, generally without pipe, a furnace or fireplace, so that a fire may be had if they have means to pay for a few sticks of wood, or some coal; and were it not for the crevices and openings admitting fresh air, many would be suffocated (a few have been) by smoke and coal gas. It is no uncommon circumstance to find several setting around on the floor, with an open furnace in their midst, burning coal. Those places are mostly back from the street, not observable in passing, reached through narrow alleys, or by a back entrance if it be a house fronting the main street, wherein each story is subdivided into numerous small rooms, oftentimes made to accommodate as many as can be stowed into them, without regard to colour or sex. Such articles as an old bed, a carpet, or even straw upon the floor, are not often seen.

"Notwithstanding their degraded occupation, yet it is possible for them to earn from ten to fifteen cents per day. There are numerous places for the disposal of their rags, bones, &c., but there are far more numerous places (and constantly increasing) for the disposal of their hard earned (or ill gotten) pennies; namely, at small shops, stocked with a few stale loaves of bread, a few potatoes, a small quantity of split wood, some candles, a few dried and stale herring, &c., exposed to view, serving too often as a cloak; whilst behind and under the counter, concealed from the eye, are kegs, jugs, bottles and measures, containing the poison, some at 4 and 5 cents a pint, and which is the great leading cause of the misery, degradation and death of so many.

"Though I have observed much misery and distress both among

blacks and whites, in different section of the city and suburbs, yet in no portion to that extent as was found in a small portion of Moyamensing among the blacks, principally in the smaller streets, courts and alleys between Fifth and Eighth and South and Fitzwater streets.

Respectfully your friend,

N. B. LEIDY."

A visit to the scene of this distress, made in the latter part of the Ninth month, 1847, is thus described.

"The vicinity of the place we sought, was pointed out by a large number of coloured people congregated on the neighbouring pavements. We first inspected the rooms, yards and cellars of the four or five houses next above Baker Street on Seventh. The cellars were wretchedly dark, damp, and dirty, and were generally rented for 12½ cents per night. These were occupied by one or more families at the present time; but in the winter season, when the frost drives those who in summer sleep abroad in fields, in board yards, in sheds, to seek more effectual shelter, they often contain from twelve to twenty lodgers per night. Commencing at the back of each house are small wooden buildings roughly put together, about six feet square, without windows or fire places, a hole about a foot square being left in the front along side of the door, to let in fresh air and light, and to let out foul air and smoke. These desolate pens, the roofs of which are generally leaky, and their floors so low, that more or less water comes in on them from the yard in rainy weather, would not give comfortable winter accommodation to a cow. Although as dismal as dirt, damp, and insufficient ventilation can make them, they are nearly all inhabited. In one of the first we entered, we found the dead body of a large negro man, who had died suddenly there. This pen was about eight feet deep by six wide. There was no bedding in it; but a box or two around the sides furnished places where two coloured persons, one said to be the wife of the deceased, were lying, either drunk or fast asleep. The body of the dead man was on the wet floor, beneath an old torn coverlet. The death had taken place some hours before; the coroner had been sent for, but had not yet arrived. A few feet south, in one of the pens attached to the adjoining house, two days before, a coloured female had been found dead. The



hole from which she was taken, appeared smaller than its neighbours generally, and had not as yet obtained another tenant.

“ ‘Let me introduce you to our Astor House,’ said our guide, turning into an alley between two of the buildings on Baker street. We followed through a dirty passage, so narrow, a stout man would have found it tight work to have threaded it. Looking before us, the yard seemed unusually dark. This we found was occasioned by a long range of two story pens, with a projecting boarded walk above the lower tier, for the inhabitants of the second story to get to the doors of their apartments. This covered nearly all the narrow yard, and served to exclude light from the dwellings below. We looked in every one of these dismal abodes of human wretchedness. Here were dark, damp holes, six feet square, without a bed in any of them, and generally without furniture, occupied by one or two families: apartments where privacy of any kind was unknown—where comfort never appeared. We endeavoured with the aid of as much light as at mid-day could find access through the open door, to see into the dark corners of these contracted abodes; and as we became impressed with their utter desolateness, the absence of bedding, and of ought to rest on but a bit of old matting on a wet floor, we felt sick and oppressed. Disagreeable odours of many kinds were ever arising; and with no ventilation but the open door, and the foot square hole in the front of the pen, we could scarcely think it possible that life could be supported, when winter compelled them to have fire in charcoal furnaces. With sad feelings we went from door to door, speaking to all, inquiring the number of their inmates, the rent they paid, and generally the business they followed to obtain a living. To this last question the usual answer was, ‘ragging and boning.’ Some of these six by six holes, had six, and even eight persons in them, but more generally two to four. In one or two instances a single man rented one for himself. The last of the lower story of the ‘Astor’ was occupied by a blackman, his black wife, and an Irish woman. The white woman was half standing, half leaning against some sort of a box, the blacks were reclining upon the piece of old matting, perhaps four feet wide, which by night furnished the only bed of the three. Passing to the end of the row, we ventured up steps much broken, and very unsafe, to the second story



platform, and visited each apartment there. It is not in the power of language to convey an adequate impression of the scene on this property. The filth, the odours, the bodily discomfort, the moral degradation everywhere apparent. Descending with difficulty, we proceeded to examine the cellars and rooms in a building still further back, having the same owner. The same want of accommodations were observed, few, if any there having a trace of bedding. For the pens, 10 cents a night were paid generally, 8 cents for the rest. The miserable apartments in the houses brought about the same prices. Some rooms, however, rented as high as one dollar per week. In the damp double row of the 'Astor building,' we found, although occupied by apparently young married people, there was no child. Neither were there children to be found, except as a very rare instance, in any of the pens we examined on other property around. Struck with the fact, we concluded, that an infant if born in them, could scarcely survive there many weeks. In those families occupying apartments in buildings, which might by courtesy be called houses, though all in these parts were miserably destitute of comforts, there were a few children. They were not however, either in number or appearance, to be compared with those healthy, happy beings, who swarm around the coloured man's home in country places.

"Now for the statistics of this 'Astor House,' and its appurtenances. The double row of pens cost perhaps \$100 to erect; and if they contain twenty apartments renting for 8 and 10 cents per night, they produce an income of \$600 per year. When the owner of this property was asked a few years back to sell it, that a House of Industry might be erected there, he declined; but in conversation with the individual who asked to purchase it, he stated that it had cost him \$1300. A physician who is frequently called to attend patients in the place, being curious to know what yearly rent the owner was receiving, undertook with another white man to visit the apartments, and inquire the amount paid by the dwellers in each. The aggregate amounted to \$1600.

"We inquired the daily earnings of those we visited, and the amount they had to pay for a glass of whiskey. Some earned 50, some 75 cents per day; but we have reason to believe that many do not realize on an average more than a few cents over

the daily rent. Whiskey, apple or rye, as best suits the taste of the drinker, is furnished at one cent per glass."

The preceding investigation has been carefully made from the statistics obtained by personal inquiry, from door to door, and which were as accurate as can be expected from such inquiries addressed to people, many of whom are too ignorant themselves to give competent answers. The general results may, it is believed, be relied upon as exhibiting the comparative situation of the different sections of our coloured population, and without placing too much reliance upon the numerical statements, they are probably near approximations to the truth.

The result is certainly interesting and remarkable. It exhibits a population, to a considerable degree, sober, industrious, and independent; steadily advancing in wealth and social improvements,—supporting from its own resources, charitable and religious associations,—exercising most of the handicraft arts—desirous of education and instruction, and possessing all the elements of civil respectability, and social happiness. The degradation and wretchedness which mark the infected district in Moyamensing, are foreign to the real character of our coloured population, to whom it would be doing a gross injustice, not to point out clearly the broad line of separation. Those inhabitants of that district among whom all this degradation prevails are a mixt assemblage of the lowest and most abandoned of both colours, as much below the general condition of the greater portion of the people of colour, as it is below that of the respectable labouring white population of our city.

Among the great causes of the wretchedness into which these people have fallen, are the unlicensed grog shops which abound in that district, and the shameless system of swindling carried on under the name of policy offices. These policy offices are places in which tickets are sold at low prices, from 3 cents to half a dollar, guaranteeing to the purchaser a prize corresponding with that which the corresponding ticket draws in some Lottery in a neighbouring state. It is almost needless to say, that the whole system is in every part a fraud. It is supported by appealing to the credulity and superstition of the people, and the ignorant purchasers have to put up with whatever tale the policy seller finds it convenient to tell. The spirit of gambling, which thus seizes upon

these deluded creatures is most absorbing and ruinous. The extent to which this evil prevailed among the more ignorant classes of our population may be judged by the fact, of which we are assured from good authority, that there were before the late law for suppressing them, 200 of these policy offices in Philadelphia.

One man, an intelligent and good workman, who had become so infatuated with the sport of gambling as to pawn all his property, confessed that in ten years he had spent four thousand dollars in this desperate gambling. Through the exertions in a great degree of a benevolent citizen of Moyamensing, who has devoted himself to the cause of temperance, and to the reformation and improvement of the people of colour, a law was enacted in the winter of 1846-7, which by enabling the courts and magistrates to take cognizance of these malpractices, has somewhat abated the evil.

It is stated on the same authority last referred to, that there were at that time one thousand shops and tavern where ardent spirits were sold to the poor, and where drams could be had costing from one to three cents.

The manner in which this system of unlicensed dram selling is carried on, is thus detailed in one of our reports. "Another great cause of much of the misery so prevalent in this district, is the numerous petty shops kept here by white emigrants as fuel and provision venders; which in fact are no better than regular licensed groceries. As an example, in small streets as well as in other streets, a house is rented by persons who occupy the front part thereof, viz. the front downstairs, as a grocery, and one or two other rooms. The rest of the house is rented out by rooms at from 50 to 75 cents per week to coloured people. The shop in front, not only supplies the black tenants with wood, coal and provision, but with rum also. These shop keepers will not sell rum to every one but only to their particular customers, the miserable blacks, their beloved associates for a season." In this region of poverty and wretchedness, the blacks live in the same houses, and often the same rooms, with the lowest class of foreign emigrants principally Irish, and it is hard to tell which has sunk the lowest in filth and misery.

The wretchedness of the condition of these people, is greatly aggravated by the entire want of all legal restrictions upon the cupidity of the landlord. The victims of the typhus fever of 1847,

were the inhabitants of rooms and buildings many of which were unfit for the residence of human beings, and most of which were in crowded and filthy courts and alleys; over which no public care is commonly extended. The law protects the poor tenant, from the exactions of the landlord, by placing a certain description of his personal effects out of the power of the constable. Why should it not with equal justice and for greater public ends, the preservation of the health and morals of that portion of the community, interfere to say what amount of ventilation and room, of personal accommodation, and the means of warmth and cleanliness, shall be guaranteed to the humblest individual; and suitably to punish the attempt to crowd human beings, into abodes not fit for domestic animals, and where vice and pestilence are sure to be engendered?

The great lesson which these facts should impress upon the people of colour and their friends, is the necessity of extending steady and kind assistance to those in that abject condition which has been described; to give them temporary relief; to teach them some useful art, and to remove them as soon as possible from the focus of misery and vice into which they have been thrown.

The superior condition of the poorer class of the people of colour in West Philadelphia above all the other districts of Philadelphia, cannot fail to strike the reader. They are nearly all common labourers, and their houses are frame buildings, presenting little to attract the eye, yet one in three owns the house he lives in, and the property is generally free from incumbrances; and nearly six in ten of the house-keepers own personal effects exceeding one hundred dollars. A larger proportion of their children attend school; and they are greatly better off as regards their general condition, than those of the same occupations living in the City. Their improved condition shows how much it is to the interest of the people of colour to avoid congregating in large numbers in the narrow and crowded streets of a great city.

More important even than this, is the adoption of an efficient and liberal plan for the education of their children, and for obtaining places where they may be trained under wholesome care and discipline in some useful handicraft art. Nor should the aid thus extended stop here, but care should be taken to procure situations in which they can, if prudent and industrious, have an



opportunity of carrying on the business they have learned, and of becoming useful and industrious citizens.

Of a large portion of this class of our fellow-citizens, it may be truly said, that they are steadily advancing in all that constitutes a respectable and intelligent community. They have numerous skilful and industrious artisans and tradesmen,—the desire for information and the feeling of self-respect are increasing among them; and it is upon the influence of the Christian example and the steady conduct, both as regards industry and morals of those who have thus raised themselves, and upon their benevolent exertions, that the future welfare and respectability of the people of colour in this city, must, as a class in the community, mainly depend.

The distinction of colour, and the prejudices which have grown out of the condition of slavery, are no doubt felt by the man of colour to be the principal barrier against his obtaining that social position to which, by his good conduct, intelligence and wealth, he is fairly entitled. There are few things in the world more unreasonable and unreasoning than these prejudices of caste and colour. To seek to overcome them by direct opposition, inflames and exasperates them, and has been, in all ages, the fruitful source of civil strife and bloodshed. But notwithstanding this, there is no prejudice which is so sure to die away, under the influence of time and a steady course of virtuous and independent conduct on the part of those who are its objects.

The condition in life and the social relations in which each of us finds himself, are in no case of our own forming. But such as we find our allotment, it is our greatest interest to fulfil the duties which spring from it, to our Creator and to ourselves, to our parents, our children and our family. The respect and esteem of the virtuous of all classes to whom he is known, is sure to follow him, who duly fulfils these, even in the humblest condition of life. The performance of these duties is the only solid foundation on which to build a reputation as a good citizen; in the sphere of one's own family and friends, all the social virtues and warm affections of the heart find their native and congenial soil.

No essential element of true happiness and respectability is wanting to him,—who in a commonwealth whose humblest citizen lives under the protection of equal laws,—fulfils the duties which

devolve upon him in his private relations. Should his mind dwell upon the prejudices of caste of which he is the victim, let him remember that Time alone can subdue them, and that they will, if he is true to his own cause, gradually but certainly die out. And let him take hope in the reflection there are many things in the present condition of the world which indicate that this feeling is passing away. The increased intercourse between different nations is slowly obliterating national prejudices. Our more intimate connection with the people inhabiting the tropics, where men of colour form a large proportion of the people and exercise the highest offices of state, must of itself, in the end, obliterate the odiousness of the distinction here. Let then the man of colour cultivate the spirit of self-respect and independence, and without allowing his mind to be disturbed by prejudices which cannot be at once removed, pursue that course of quiet industry and unpretending virtue which will make him happy and respectable as an individual, and will contribute more than any thing else, to elevate the condition of his people.

This proper feeling of self-respect would tend to check the disposition so prevalent among many of the people of colour, to indulge in love of show and extravagance, in anniversary processions and entertainments, which add nothing to their respectability in the eyes of their fellow-citizens, and foster tastes and habits most unfriendly to the real improvement of the people of colour.

Apart from this inconsiderate waste of their funds, the large amounts contributed by the members of the numerous beneficial societies for mutual aid, is one of the most gratifying facts brought to light by the investigation which has been made. These societies might become the means of much more extensive usefulness than they yet are. Were they to extend their care to the education of the children of their members, it would involve little or no additional expense; for the public provision in the County of Philadelphia for the education of all, to say nothing of the numerous private charities, would be found ample for all who need this assistance.

There is no way in which the patriotic man of colour can so promote the well-being of his people, as in kindling and keeping alive the desire for instruction. A good school is not merely a

place for training in knowledge, but in virtue and morals. The habits of docility, of regularity, of respect for authority and love of order, which a child acquires in a good school would, in many instances, convert the turbulent and vicious boys who waste their time idling in the streets, into quiet and obedient children, and prepare them for being industrious apprentices and respectable citizens.

Were these beneficial societies still further to extend their care, and to have an oversight in procuring good places for children ready to leave school, it would be another important step in improving their condition.

It is greatly to be desired, that there should be more mechanics among the people of colour, and that more of their children should learn mechanical trades. A good master workman, who by steady perseverance and integrity has acquired a reputation for skill and industry, and who trains up his apprentices in the same knowledge and habits, is a valuable and useful citizen; and instances could be pointed out in which one such man has raised up a succession of skilful and successful workmen in the business he has pursued,—who have received their full share of public patronage.

Much as has been done, and as is doing by public spirited and benevolent individuals and associations for the improvement of the people of colour, it will be of little avail if it is not seconded by corresponding efforts among themselves. The partial suppression of the policy offices and dram-shops,—the formation of temperance societies,—the establishment of ragged schools and houses of industry, will all prove merely momentary benefits, soon to be lost sight of in the widening spread of immorality and crime, if the spirit of improvement is not awakened in the persons who are the objects of all this benevolence. It is upon themselves, therefore, and the influence of good example and virtuous conduct among themselves, that the people of colour must mainly depend for elevating their condition as a class.

Let the virtuous and good among them never forget, that all the temporal advantages which are here held up to their view, are chiefly valuable as springing from and connected with a sense of religious obligation; and that they can never be permanently enjoyed except among a people “fearing the Lord and working righteousness.”